

**D. Dispute Resolution Procedures.**

33. HITN opposes most of the Commission's proposed changes in dispute resolution procedures. The Commission's proposals for these procedures will put unaffiliated programmers that seek leased access at a great disadvantage vis-a-vis cable operators and will cause delays rather than expedite the process.

**E. Reporting Requirements.**

34. HITN supports proposals to require cable operators to make periodic reports (at least every six months, but perhaps as frequently as quarterly), which will provide the Commission and the public with information from which each operator's compliance with leased access rules and rates may be monitored. Similar reporting procedures were utilized to monitor compliance in the above-cited matter regarding public broadcasting interconnections and could serve as a model.

**VII. CONCLUSION**

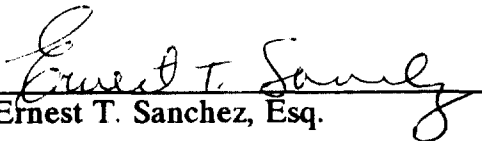
35. HITN is appreciative of the opportunity to provide comment on these issues which are of such great importance to programming entities like itself and to the public interest. As can be seen from its Fact Sheet (Exhibit A), HITN offers vital and significant educational services, which meet all the criteria and serve the particular goals that Congress had in mind in the relevant statutory policies. HITN's staff is presently

gathering the kind of experiential and quantifiable data that the Commission specifically seeks in this proceeding and will provide those types of answers in its Reply Comments.

Respectfully submitted,

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# ABOUT HITN

## OVERVIEW

HITN was established in 1983 as a private non-profit organization to create a network of noncommercial telecommunications facilities to advance the educational, social, cultural, and economic aspiration of American Hispanic residents. HITN's programming serves as a cultural and educational link between the nation's fastest growing ethnic group and an increasingly complex American society.

HITN holds Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS) licenses to operate wireless cable television channels in 41 cities, of which 27 have been constructed and are operational. (See Exhibit A - HITN MAP of Markets). HITN currently offers 24-hour programming in the Albany and New York City areas.

HITN also has applications pending at the FCC for authority to construct ITFS facilities in an additional 62 markets within the 48 contiguous States and Puerto Rico. HITN has entered into relationships with various "Wireless" cable operators, which constitute HITN's technical partners. Each wireless operator has agreed to assist in acquiring equipment needed to transmit HITN's programming to their entire subscriber base, and install at least 10 reception antennas at educational and community institutions expressing an interest in using HITN programming. In New York City HITN has provided installations for 52 schools in the five boroughs. Recent contracts with wireless operators also require them to provide satellite downlinks to receive HITN programming. Upon completion of the construction of its currently licensed facilities, HITN will become the largest private ITFS network in the United States.

HITN has recruited prominent members of the community in each licensed city for a Local Educational Telecommunications Advisory Committee (LETAC), to assist in determining programming needs and recommend strategies to satisfy those needs, promote use of programming and facilitate outreach to the communities. The New York City LETAC is composed of the designated teachers from the 52 affiliate schools (the "HITN Affiliate Schools"). Once full national distribution of HITN programming is achieved, LETAC members will oversee station operations and promote use of the programming in schools and the community. Eventually, the LETAC will become the basis for

building each station into an independent affiliate which can develop local programming and pursue local fund-raising. HITN currently has access to over 300,000 wireless cable subscribers.

**H**ITN is headquartered in New York City where it currently has a comprehensive broadcast system which includes a full production facility with video, audio, origination, editing, and teleconferencing capability (one way video, two-way audio); a microwave link to the transmission site located atop the Empire State Building; and downlinking capability for the reception of domestic satellite programming. Currently, HITN provides interactive distance learning services to 52 New York City High Schools and expects to expand its network of affiliate schools to include a total of 70 schools in 1996.

**H**ITN is about to establish a new state-of-the-art production and television facility which will serve as its headquarters at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The facility is being underwritten by \$3 million in funding provided by the New York City Council. The Brooklyn site facility will be equipped with microwave transmission and receiving equipment, multiple domestic as well as international satellite uplink and downlink equipment; a television facility and teleconference room (includes a codec, video system, audio and control systems). This facility will enable HITN to enhance its interactive distance learning services to schools. Interactivity can be expanded from one-way video to two-way video if so desired.

**B**ased on HITN's record of success and its planning for implementation of a national network, the U.S. Congress has approved a \$500,000 appropriation underwriting satellite transponder time to enable HITN to begin its national programming. As of March, 1996 HITN commenced a five-year contract for space segment on the Intelsat 705 satellite.

**W**ith the full cooperation of its technical partners, HITN intends to provide full interactive capability to access the Internet, provide high speed data transmissions to participating sites plus other interactive computer-based programs.

## **CUSTOMIZED VIDEO CURRICULUM PROGRAMMING**

### **1. Programming**

#### **a. Corriente Cultural**

**W**ith partial funding from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, HITN produces Corriente Cultural, a cultural series of fifteen-minute segments featuring a unique blend of Hispanic Art, Music and Drama and focusing on the different aspects of the Hispanic traditions

in New York. This year HITN has added to its existing video-library five (5) new, half-hour live and interactive Corriente Cultural programs on the influence of Latin (Salsa) music on Hispanic culture, bringing the total to fifty (50) programs in the series. These new segments were introduced to the schools in January, 1996, the last one to be aired in May, 1996. HITN proposes to expand this five-part Salsa series into a feature production. These new segments will become part of our regular rotation of our Corriente Cultural.

Prior to each of the five live broadcasts, study guides in both English and Spanish are distributed to each of the HITN Affiliates in the New York City area. Individual classes from different schools are given the opportunity to participate in our live studio sessions, while the rest of the students interact with the presenters via a toll-free telephone line. Following the broadcast, students can continue to communicate with the presenter via fax and the toll-free line.

HITN plans similar programs to cover Hispanic culture in other areas of the United States including influences of Mexican, Cuban, Dominican and other Latin Americans on U.S. culture. These may be produced by local affiliates across the country based on the origins of the Latino communities within the affiliate area.

b. **Global Satellite Field Trips**

Using its teleconferencing capability (one-way video, two-way audio) HITN produced and distributed two 1 ½ hours interactive satellite field trips, one in Spanish and another in English, featuring Old San Juan, Puerto Rico to its Affiliate Schools in February, 1996. Originating in Old San Juan, the field trip featured and provided an in-depth historical perspective of colonial landmarks and points of interest in the Old San Juan areas such as "El Morro", "La Fortaleza", "El Capitolio", "La Puerta de San Juan" and "Casa Blanca". See Appendix A for the proposed format of the program.

Through an essay writing contest, and in consultation with members of the New York City LETAC, HITN selected three students to co-host the show from Puerto Rico.

Teachers elicited prebroadcast activities from study guides that HITN provided to the teachers and students prior to the event.

This satellite field trip to Puerto Rico was the first of a series of international field trips that HITN intends to produce. Other productions will include sites such as Machu Pichu, Peru (Inca

Pyramids), Chichen Itza, Mexico (Mayan Ruins) and Isla de Pascua, Chile. To facilitate the production of field trips to these sites in Latin America, HITN has established relationships with both public and private entities in the various countries who have agreed to collaborate.

c. **Video-Teleconference**

One of the most important utilizations of HITN's telecommunications capability is video teleconferencing. HITN successfully produced a video teleconference to launch a national drug awareness and prevention campaign developed by the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention targeting Latino communities in the New York metropolitan area and Northern New Jersey.

d. **Inventory of HITN Programming**

HITN has reached out to broadcasters and educational institutions throughout Latin America, the United States and in Spain to identify sources for non-commercial, Spanish-language educational and cultural programming of relevance to the New York Hispanic community.

New York City funds as well as air time leasing revenue will be used to substantially expand HITN's programming acquisitions from broadcasters, with whom HITN is currently negotiating Program Acquisition Contracts for an aggregate of over 400 hours of programming from entities such as Telecultura Brazil, Canal 22 in Mexico, Prodifilm Productions, Malowiki Productions in Argentina and TV UNAM in Mexico. Under the contracts, the program suppliers will furnish HITN, at cost and upon request, a written transcript for the programs, thereby facilitating HITN's ability to perform written translations of the programs that may be used for instructional purposes.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

1. **Training and Professional Development**

In order to encourage and facilitate classroom use of the Corriente Cultural series and Global Satellite Field Trips at the Affiliate Schools in New York City, HITN successfully produced two one and a half hour live and interactive teacher teletraining sessions in 1995, using one way video, two way audio technology, with an average of 80 teachers participating and able to call via a toll free telephone line.

The Global Satellite Field Trip portion of the teletraining session was divided into three parts: (a) pre-broadcast activities consisting of guides and an orientation tape to acquaint the viewers with the content of the training session; (b) the live broadcast; and post-broadcast activities to prepare students for the actual field trip.

The Corriente Cultural portion presented one of the teachers of our Affiliate Schools who discussed the educational value of the series and how the series can be successfully incorporated into the curriculum. The program also featured actual excerpts of a prerecorded classroom segment using the series.

HITN intends to regularly schedule teacher training sessions to serve as refresher sessions and/or first-time sessions according to the schools' needs. HITN recently hired a full-time Distance Learning Coordinator to ensure that the materials will be of the highest quality and that all activities will be carried out in a professional and timely manner.

Among HITN's objectives in the area of educational support services are :

- Develop a cadre teachers and or administrators as leaders to initiate telecommunications technology in their respective schools.
- Assist teachers to nurture k-12 students on use of interactive educational programs using wireless telecommunications technology.
- Create videos and related wireless training materials in English and Spanish explaining the use and application of the national information infrastructure and access to existing information.

## HITN Markets

